

BITS AND BYTES

June 2012

Newsletter of the Midland Computer Club

<http://mcc.apcug.org/>

GENERAL CLUB MEETING 7:00 P.M.

4th Wednesday of the month at the
Midland Community Center
2001 George St., Midland, MI

This month's date:
June 27, 2012

This month's topic:
YouTube ("The Whole Ball of String") - Larry
Piper, Howard Lewis, Carol Picard

What you missed!
Bill Tower gave a presentation on Adobe
Lightroom 4

Upcoming Activities:
July - No meeting
August - Club Picnic

Program Coordinators
Howard Lewis lewis3ha@chartermi.net
Bill Tower stressed@tir.com

Please let Howard or Bill know of topics you would
like covered at future meetings.

President Piper's Ponderings



June has come to mean high school reunion for me. Since I married my high school sweetheart, the reunion has double the benefits for our family.

Most attendees are within plus or minus 10 years of my age, i.e., we are all old as dirt. Such an age gap at 15 years of age would be insurmountable; today we all fit together like a pair of well-worn gloves. We are the ideal date for one another; we all share similar experiences.

What we don't share is a similar digital background. I sat through an entire evening without hearing or seeing a single cell phone. For the first time, the school reunion committee used email to contact alumni; they also still do the traditional snail mail contacts. While slightly over half of our group has a single computer, they only use it for email, and then only to check their email about once per week. When Judy suggested the use of Facebook to facilitate class communication, she found that Facebook is a foreign word.

I am learning to be more tolerant of this generational digital divide; just don't try to tell me that youth are 'so smart' because they can use digital devices. I am likely to reply that, "Honey, you have got the issue backwards."

On a different subject, I would like to continue to emphasize that copies of medical records are much easier to obtain now that doctors and hospitals have gone digital. Yes, you have to sign a form, and if you

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Board Meeting

Date to be determined
 Chapel Lane Presbyterian Church,
 5501 Jefferson Ave., Midland MI

Useful, useless and strange (in no particular order) Web Sites (submitted by Howard Lewis):

<http://tinyurl.com/82cdkp6>

It has been ten years since Bill Gates wrote his "Trustworthy Computing" memo. How have things changed during those ten years. Ed Bott, from Ziff-Davis, looks at how malware has changed during that time and how Microsoft has responded.

<http://tinyurl.com/blzbid9>

We frequently hear the terms "sandboxing" and "virtual machine." Leo Notenboom explains the differences in these two technologies and how they work.

<http://gethuman.com>

We all too well know how difficult it usually is to talk to a real human being when you call most major corporations. This site has phone numbers for many corporations that connect directly with a person.

<http://tinyurl.com/49bd69g>

<http://tinyurl.com/757eo3g>

<http://tinyurl.com/7897h2g>

Have you ever thought about the future of glass? Watch these three videos on how Corning views the future in *A Day of Glass*.

<http://tinyurl.com/c8afcbm>

This is just a quiet little square in Belgium that needs a little excitement. Watch this video to the end!

Membership Enrollment Form

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZIP _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

Membership dues FAMILY (\$20) STUDENT (\$15) New Member _____ Renewal _____

Please fill out the above form and mail it along with payment of check or money order to :

MIDLAND COMPUTER CLUB
 1816 Bauss Ct
 Midland, MI 48642-4023

Attn: Membership Chairman

You may also pay for membership at a regular club meeting

President Piper's Ponderings (*continued*)

go back a few years there may be a charge, and 20 years is about the limit of hospital records. This change in attitude by medical personnel that a patient can actually understand what is in these records is very refreshing. I love the fact that, if you are a patient, the cost is \$1 per page; if you are a lawyer, the cost may be \$10 per page.

Finally, last week I was forced to come up with a low cost repair solution for the minimal-use computer person I mentioned above. It is worth noting that for \$100 one can always obtain a used, XP computer from two of the repair shops in Midland. When you ABSOLUTELY, POSSITIVELY must have a replacement, this sure beats forking over \$500 for a shiny, new PC just to get on the Internet.

(The above comments are the opinion of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Midland Computer Club.)

Tips, Tricks & Techniques (submitted by Howard Lewis):**Create A System Repair Disc For Windows 7**

Most new computers today do not come with a Windows CD/DVD. If you run into computer problems later on, you may not have a way to repair your computer. Windows 7 provides an easy way to create a system repair disc that you can use when your computer won't boot. To create this disc:

Click on *Start*.

Select *Maintenance* (you may have to go to *All Programs* for this).

Select *Create a System Repair Disc* (administrative privileges will be required).

Follow the screen instructions.

Now if your computer becomes unbootable, you should be able to use this disc to try and repair your Windows installation.

Increase the Number of Jump List Items

Jump Lists have proven to be one of the more useful items in Windows 7. By default a Jump List will display the last 10 items accessed, however, this can be changed if desired. Jump Lists are simply shortcuts to your most recently used documents. To change the number of items which will be displayed in your Jump Lists use the following steps:

Right-click *Start*, select *Properties* and then *Customize*.

The resulting dialog box will show many things that can be changed in the **Start** menu.

Near the bottom of the dialog box set *Number of recent items to display in Jump Lists* to the number desired.

Click *OK* twice.

Now if you have changed the number to 12, Microsoft Word will show the 12 most recently used documents in the corresponding Jump List.

Quick Access to Task Manager

Most people use the old "three-finger salute" (Ctrl-Alt-Del) to access **Task Manager**. But if your hand is already on the mouse, it probably is easier to use that instead. To use the mouse to access **Task Manager**, simply right-click on a blank spot on the *Task Bar* and select *Start Task Manager*.

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Cash, check and . . . what about credit card?

By Jim Evans, Vice President, Greater Cleveland PCUG, Ohio

APCUG Secretary, www.gcpcug.org, [jamesievens \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:jamesievens@gmail.com)

And you say, just check or cash (and maybe PayPal on your group's website). The Square mobile card reader (<https://squareup.com/>) might be something you want to take a look at for your group. You can use it for membership dues, raffle tickets and other items you might sell.

Sign up for their service and they will send you a free reader or you can buy one at Best Buy, Walmart, Target, Radio Shack and Apple stores. Sign up for the service and they will give you your money back. The reader costs \$10 and comes with a \$10 redemption code.

How big is the unit? One inch square. You've got postage stamps bigger than the card reader.

How do they get their money? They charge 2.75% per transaction. If you need to enter credit card number manually, the rate is 3.5% plus 15 cents per transaction. But, there is NO monthly or yearly service fee or contract.

What do you use? Your cell phone and the very small card reader plugged into your phone's audio connection. The reader is compatible with Apple iOS devices running 4.0 and up and Google Android devices running 2.1 and up. It also works with various tablets.

Which cards can you swipe? MasterCard, Visa, Discover and American Express.

Is the transaction secure? According to their website, "Security is one of our biggest priorities at Square. To protect Square users and their customers, all information by our users has been encrypted and submitted to our servers securely. Our software and hardware meet (and in most cases exceed) all PCI-Compliant regulations as well. As per our User Agreement, Security Policy and Privacy Policy, we will

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never sell information to third party vendors.” “Square requires sensitive data to be encrypted using industry-standard methods when stored on disk or transmitted over public networks.” It’s encrypted to the 128-bit standard.

How do you get your money? You register a checking account with Square and your money is deposited each evening. They will do a test to verify that the routing and account number are correct by depositing two very small amounts and then withdrawing the same amounts. You will need to go online and enter the two amounts.

Can you give a receipt? Yes, you can e-mail or text a receipt after the transaction, either immediately or later via History. Just like the Apple Store and other major retailers. With the iPad you can print a receipt immediately after the transaction or later via History. You will need a Star Micronics receipt printer.

Legalese. You will need to sign a Square User Agreement, a legal agreement between you and Square, Inc. Part one explains all the terms that govern your use of the payment processing service and Part two contains provisions that limit their liability and information about arbitration for potential legal disputes. You will need to sign this agreement to use the service and you do it electronically.

The mobile card reader is Twitter co-creator Jack Dorsey’s latest venture.

Check out their website at www.squareup.com for more detailed information. There are many how tos and tips on the website as well as videos.

Copyrights, Internet create a difficult conflict

By Toby Scott, Technical Advisor, Channel Islands PCUG, CA
February 2012 issue, The Outer Edge, www.cipcug.org, [tscott \(at\) scotts.net](mailto:tscott@scotts.net)

Now that the Stop Online Piracy Act and Protect IP Act (SOPA/PIPA) have been defeated, it is time to look at the dynamics of the conflict between copyright holders and Internet hosts.

If a publisher creates a book, you can do pretty much whatever you want to with it. You cannot, however, photocopy it and then sell the copies. This isn’t much of a restriction as it is time consuming and expensive in paper and ink to make the copies and in almost all cases it is far easier to just buy another copy from the copyright holder. This has long been a precept of U.S. law.

Things changed with the advent of the Internet. Now, you can copy nearly anything and distribute it for nothing.

Copyright holders are justifiably irked that the sale of one copy of a work can result in the work being distributed to hundreds, thousands or even millions. What makes it even worse is that in most cases the people making the clones are kids. They have no money, criminal prosecution makes the copyright holders look like ogres and the public thinks the copyright holders are just a bunch of greedy slobs who want to deprive the public of what is rightfully theirs.

So, the copyright holders are attempting to force those who have deep pockets and control some layer of the Internet into being their enforcement arm. This flies in the face of current legal precedents originating with the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. The DMCA essentially provides a safe harbor for online service providers as long as they don’t deliberately shelter copyrighted information.

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SOPA/PITA was essentially an attempt to repeal the safe harbor provisions of the DMCA. Doing so would have made life much easier for the copyright holders. They could go after companies with deep pockets and force them to take steps to remove copyrighted material — or even prevent it from being uploaded in the first place.

The problem with this solution, at least as far as the online service providers are concerned, is that they would become (at least theoretically) liable for the publication of copyrighted material. Can you imagine Facebook trying to vet every post of every user before the rest of the public could see it? Could Google possibly know whether the content it indexes is copyrighted by the owner of the site? I host about 100 websites on my server. In most cases, I have no idea what my customers put up on their sites. Had SOPA/PIPA passed, we would have had to go out of the webhosting business. We don't have the resources to examine the content, nor the deep pockets necessary to fight if someone protests. And you can't just remove the material as soon as someone claims to be the owners and threaten you with legal action if you don't remove it. People have already started making the accusation that their work has been pirated simply to shut up viewpoints they disagree with.

It is ironic that just about the time SOPA/PIPA died, the Justice Department closed down Megaupload, one of the largest file download sites. Megaupload allowed users to create accounts, upload files and share with friends. Certainly, lots of the material on the site was copyrighted by others, but a considerable amount was also family pictures, company material for sharing with employees and other perfectly legal material.

As it stands, no one who uploaded can access their data, so someone who thought the data was safe "in the cloud" is without it now. It is possible some may be able to retrieve their data, but appears unlikely at this point.

The key here is that a lot of data at Megaupload was perfectly legal.

Undoubtedly the majority of it was stolen copyrighted material. Not only is the founder in jail, but several employees are as well. It will be interesting to read the details of the criminal trial, assuming it happens in the U.S.

The fact that authorities were able to coordinate an international investigation has some believing that SOPA/PITA were unnecessary. Others claim that given that Megaupload was making hundreds of millions of dollars, mainly from people distributing copyrighted material, it is evidence that more needs to be done.

It is one thing to go after Megaupload, where it is certain that the bulk of the income comes from illegal activities, but it is vastly different for Facebook, where clearly the vast majority of the material is not copyrighted. How far should online service providers go to prevent copyrighted material from being distributed through their servers?

Perhaps more chilling is the thought that should the U.S. force online service providers to create software to screen content, foreign governments could then require them to screen content offensive to the government. Governments already require that they have a backdoor so they can listen to cell phone conversations, and they restrict search engines from indexing certain sites, so coercing online service providers to toe the line could be child's play. Software that screened for copyright would be more than powerful enough to screen for material critical of a government. That is, of course, if such software could be written in the first place. It's not clear that it could be.

At some point, the whole concept of copyright and fair use will have to be revisited to take into account the technological advances that are rapidly outdated laws that were created 150 years ago. That's going to be exceedingly difficult. And it can't happen until all sides have a reasonable understanding of the issues the other sides face.

Memo To Software Developers: LEAVE ME ALONE!

By Walt Graham, President, Connecticut PC Users Group

February 2012 issue, CPCUG Newsletter, www.ctpc.org, president (at) ctpc.org

It seems no matter how carefully I configure my computers and other devices to work the way I want, there's always some programmer just one step ahead of me. Just when I think everything is perfect, he or she manages to break it!

Example: after a couple of years of automatic updating, my browser of choice, Google Chrome, became sluggish. A Google search turned up a number of such complaints, but no solutions. Unable to find an answer, I switched to Firefox but noticed that some features I used all the time in Chrome (Duplicate Tab, for example) were missing. So I found and installed an add-on called "Tab Utilities Lite" that brought those features back. Problem solved – until this morning (Groundhog Day) when Firefox automatically updated itself to v10.0, thereby breaking Tab Utilities Lite!

Yes, I suspect the developer of Tab Utilities Lite will update his utility to work with Firefox 10, but why couldn't Firefox have pointed out the incompatibility *before* delivering the update, instead of afterward, and let me choose to keep using v9 for awhile longer?

Thirteen months ago my otherwise excellent online broker, E*Trade, updated an online application called MarketCaster that I use for obtaining real-time quotes. It hasn't worked correctly since – it now shows totals in the "gains/losses" column as "minus 100%" in all my watch lists. Their IT folks have acknowledged and apologized for the problem but for over a year now they have either been unable to fix it, or perhaps it's not a priority – maybe other users don't bother totaling their watch lists. Immediately after the update I asked, "Can I return to the previous version that worked?" "No, there's no way we can do that," they replied.

A few months ago my wife complained that Yahoo! had updated her online calendar requiring more clicks to get things done.

Recently my TomTom GPS started nagging me to update its maps. Thinking that could do no harm, I downloaded and installed the new maps. Before the update, I was able to drive for miles on the highway in peaceful silence. As I neared my exit, she (why is her name "Tom?") would tell me to prepare to exit. But ever since the update, she chimes in at every exit along the way reminding me *not* to exit but to instead stay on the highway! So I can't live with her anymore but I can't live without her either. The workaround, of course, is to mute the sound – and risk missing the exit.

Intuit has now begun warning me that I need to update to Quicken 2012 by April in order to keep downloading data from my financial institutions. What will the new version break? I can hardly wait.

Facebook users can likely look forward to some nasty surprises when the company goes public and updates the user interface to better monetize the site for its shareholders.

Videographers who rely on Apple's "Final Cut Pro" for their livelihood are up in arms because some months ago Apple made sweeping changes to the program that severely disrupt their workflow. For the first time in over a decade I won't be upgrading to the latest version of Samplitude, the wonderful audio software I use to make a living, because the latest version introduces new annoyances without addressing old ones.

With installable software such as Samplitude and FCP, vs. "the cloud," at least the user can choose to *not* upgrade but, unless you stay current, you lose a level of support and inevitable changes in the OS and hardware environment will eventually render the old version useless.

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So, all I ask is to be LEFT ALONE! When it's time to upgrade, bill me if you must, but let me keep working the way I want without spending needless hours trying to outsmart the programmers.

I realize we need to keep moving forward – the Firefox update, for example, may well contain some important improvements in security. But enough is enough! It's not that each individual change is a crisis – although some are – it's that we use so many different pieces of software these days, much of it embedded in various devices, that the totality of change can seem overwhelming.

Software developers might want to take a deep breath and ask themselves, "Is this change really necessary and what possible damage could it do?" – before adding another bell or whistle that might only cause more trouble.

Power USB

By Clint Tinsley, Editor, Idaho PCUG, December 2011 issue, Bits and Pieces
<http://idahopcug.apcug.org/>, [c_tinsley \(at\) msn.com](mailto:c_tinsley@msn.com)

In a presentation to the IPCUG a couple months back, I touched on some considerations in using the USB (Universal Serial Bus) connectors on your computer. This article will reinforce the points I made in that presentation but will go much further.

First, let's talk about the laptop as the new desktop computer. The laptop offers many things a desktop system doesn't offer out-of-box, such as webcam, built in speakers, touch pad, keyboard, and monitor, all in a package that is powerful, highly useful, and portable. However, one downside is that most all connections to the laptop are made using its USB Ports which are generally few in number, typically 3. I have a new netbook that only has 2 USB ports.

As an example desktop system and how I use USB, my work-at-home desktop computer is a HP ProBook 6455b, a small 14" notebook, standard keyboard without a keypad, and 3 USB ports. I have no less than 6 devices that must connect via USB for work.

- 1) Wireless Full sized Keyboard/Mouse
- 2) 2nd Display Monitor Adapter
- 3) USB Active Key for VPN Network Access
- 4) USB Powered Speakers
- 5) USB Powered Chiller Pad to keep the PC Cool.
- 6) USB Storage device.

With only 3 ports, I have to use 4 port hubs on one of the ports to connect to items 3 through 6. And I am still not done with devices I might need to connect such as a second DVD drive, card reader, or tablet. There are three things that need to be considered in using USB ports, damage control, USB power, and USB port speed, which I will cover in that order.

Damage Control

Shown right are the 2 USB ports on one of my laptops. One is usable, one is obviously not! The left port is still good and normal in appearance. The right port is unusable due to the connector material being busted out and the 4 connectors hanging out in space; I don't know how this happened but I strongly suspect that something plugged into that port was struck hard enough to break it. I really recommend against plugging any large sized devices into the USB



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ports that could damage the ports if accidentally struck or leaned on, which can also damage the internals of the computer. The picture below shows a short extension cable that can greatly reduce that kind of damage from occurring.



Power Management

The USB 2.0 specification limits the current available per port to 500 mA, or .5A, which is half an amp of current. This is not enough current to run some USB devices such as USB DVD Drives and External Hard Drives, even the “pocket” sized ones. Vendors of hubs, DVD drives and USB drives get around this power limitation supplying a cable that uses 2 USB Ports on your laptop, one for data/power and second for power in order to provide enough power for the device itself and anything else that might be plugged into it. In well-designed laptops, each USB port is supposed to be limited by a Vbus power controller, isolating the 5V on the USB port from the laptop, providing some protection to the computer, but this may not be the case in all laptops and further damage or overheating can occur. The solution to this problem is the use of an externally powered USB hub that has its own AC power supply. Unfortunately, many USB hubs don't come with a power supply even though they have a jack for which to plug in a power supply. One such 7 port hub I showed at the meeting is the Ativa® Mobil-IT™ 7-Port USB 2.0 Desktop Hub with a 3.5 amp power supply (Seven times .5A!), which I had purchased at Office Depot for \$25.99 (SKU 196179). A search of Amazon reveals a number of 4 to 7 port USB hubs with power supplies from a few dollars on up. It is very important that when buying a USB Hub is to make sure it comes with its own power supply.

USB Speed or the need for Speed!

You may be fortunate enough to get one of the new laptops with a 3.0 USB port. These new ports are capable of speeds up to 5 GB/second! Compare that to 480Mbps for high speed 2.0 ports and down to 12 Mbps for legacy 1.1 ports on older computers. Note that the 480MBs is a per port specification and when you connect a hub into a USB port and depending on the devices plugged into hub, overall speed through the hub is limited to 480 Mbps, so don't try to play a DVD, use an USB Hard Drive, and a thumb drive, all at the same time. If you shop around and get one of the new 3.0 hubs with an external power supply, you will be blessed with great speed on all the ports, just make sure you plug it into a 3.0 port on your laptop. My personal laptop has 4 USB ports, the two 3.0 ports which are distinguished by a dark blue colored insulation material on the contacts (such as in the picture below). The 2.0 ports have a black insulation material. One other advantage of using powered hubs is that they can be used to charge up USB devices like MP3 players without having to turn on a computer or leave it on just to charge a device.



StarTech.com 4 Port Black SuperSpeed USB 3.0 Hub \$42 (with Power Supply)

Say No Thank You to New Toolbar - Opt Out During the Installation Process

By Leo Notenboom, Ask Leo, Article Source: <http://articlesbyleo.com/>

Have you ever had a new toolbar suddenly "appear" in your browser? Although it might not seem like you agreed to install it, the likelihood is that you did.

One of the most frustrating strategies companies use to deploy more toolbars relies on your not paying close attention when installing software or other programs on your computer.

For example, let's say you're installing an update to the popular Java runtime, which is software used by some websites to provide rich functionality beyond just displaying static pages.

The update consists of the normal installation program, and then proceeds to ask you the normal installation things, including agreeing to the software license.

Then another screen comes up and without reading it you're about to click Next.

Wait!

In doing so you would have been asking to have the Yahoo! toolbar installed.

Nothing against Yahoo, Java or Sun here, but this can be very annoying. It's not that the Yahoo toolbar is bad. It's actually a fine toolbar. The annoying part is this:

- The offer appears during an update- you'd already made your selection when you initially installed the program, there's no need to ask again.
- It defaults to "Yes". Anything optional, particularly anything totally unrelated to what is being installed, should default to off.
- They're "sneaking it in". OK, this is really subjective, but you can't help but feel like this might be an attempt to sneak the installation in, during a process where people are usually just hitting Next repeatedly to get the install over with.

This installation is not the only case. During installation of many software packages - both initial installs and updates - the option to install a toolbar will often be selected by default. You have to click a box to opt out. This choice typically comes during the middle of the process when you're conditioned to hitting "next" just get it over with. If you're not paying attention once you're done suddenly a new toolbar will "appear." A toolbar you didn't realize you had actually agreed to.

Typically, installers include this option to earn profit. It's a way for those offering free software to recoup some of the cost. But this habit certainly shows up in paid for software as well.

This tactic is a perfect example of why it is important to pay attention during installations and updates. Read each step before clicking next or you might find you're about to "ask" for something you didn't really want at all.

Get more free tech help and advice from Leo Notenboom by visiting <http://ask-leo.com> With over 30 years of industry experience, including an 18 year career as a software engineer with Microsoft, Leo gives real answers to real questions from ordinary computer users at Ask Leo! Subscribe to Leo's weekly newsletter now and receive a free ebook: "Internet Safety - Keeping Your Computer Safe on the Internet", a collection of steps, tools and concepts you need to know to keep your computer and your information safe. Article Source: http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Leo_Notenboom

Shortcuts and How to Type Strange / Odd Symbols on Your Computer

By Tanya Mattson, Librarian, Computer Users of Erie, Pennsylvania, January 2012 issue, Horizons
www.cuerie.com, faith6860 (at) verizon.net

Ever wondered how people manage to type those 'strange' symbols (for instance ¶) that are seen – in emails, websites, letters? Generally, in many programs everyone knows (at least for Windows) these simple shortcuts.

TO SELECT ALL (as in the complete document or page) Hold down the Ctrl key and press A

TO COPY (as in the selected section) Hold down the Ctrl key and press C

TO CUT (as in remove part of a paragraph or sentence) Hold down the Ctrl key and press X

TO PASTE (the cut or copied selection) Hold down the Ctrl key and press V. These shortcuts work not only in documents, but in some drawing and photo applications.

Now for the 'odd' ones:

HOW TO TYPE CENT SIGN ¢

Hold down the ALT key and type 0162 on the numeric keypad

HOW TO TYPE BULLET • (list dot)

Hold down the ALT key and type 0149 on the numeric keypad

HOW TO TYPE COPYRIGHT © (copyright sign, copyright symbol)

Hold down the ALT key and type 0169 on the numeric keypad

HOW TO TYPE PARAGRAPH ¶ (paragraph symbol)

Hold down the ALT key and type 0182 on the numeric keypad

HOW TO TYPE REGISTERED SYMBOL ® (registered trademark)

Hold down the ALT key and type 0174 on the numeric keypad

HOW TO TYPE TRADEMARK ™

Hold down the ALT key and type 0153 on the numeric keypad

HOW TO TYPE HEART ♥

Hold down the ALT key and type 3 on the numeric keypad

To find more/others symbols, punctuation, accent marks – just search the web.

"How to type symbols" search led me to these sites:

Alt-Codes.org <http://alt-codes.org/how/> (they have pages for Mac, Linux, Windows, and Laptops)

How To Type.net <http://www.howtotype.net/> (just click on the mark you want, and it will list the different formats)

Wikihow.com <http://www.wikihow.com/Type-Symbols-Using-theALT-Key> uses the character map found in the computers.

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For Windows:

Click on the Windows Start menu.

Select "Programs", "Accessories", "System Tools", then "Character Map". (For Windows 7 just search for character map)

Choose a font

Double-click the character(s) you want. *It is important to select the exact font you're using in your document before selecting the symbol you wish to copy. Not all font-faces contain all possible combinations of available symbols.*

Copy.

Return to your document.

And Paste. Font size of the character may need to be changed after you've pasted it into your document.

For Macs:

Hold the Option key and press any other key to get custom characters. To get a second set of custom characters, hold down both the Option key and the Shift key.

One can always do searches for not only symbols, but special characters, accent marks – or if you know the name do a search for "how to type infinity symbol"

Good luck!

Tips for Mixing Graphics with Text

By Nancy DeMarte, Regular Columnist (Office Talk), Sarasota PCUG, Florida

January 2012 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor, www.spcug.org, [ndemarte \(at\) Verizon.net](mailto:ndemarte@verizon.net)

Have you had this frustrating experience when working with Microsoft Office? You are writing your holiday newsletter in Word and have some good photos of the cousins and grandparents to include. You've typed the text and have chosen an appropriate spot for the first photo to appear. You click in this spot, and then click Insert - Picture. You locate the photo in My Pictures, select it, and click Insert. The photo appears, but not where you want it. When you try to drag it to its chosen place, it either won't move or pushes too much text below it, leaving a blank space between the photo and the margin. Welcome to the tricky world of mixing graphics with text.



A graphic (photo, shape, WordArt, or drawing object) inserted into text is either **Inline** or **Floating**. The default property is Inline, which means that a photo will keep its position relative to the text. In the example above, you want the photo to stay related to specific text, so Inline seems like a good choice. But you also want the ability to move the photo around, if needed, and to eliminate the extra white space next to the photo. You need to make the photo floating, which means the photo will keep its position relative to the page, rather than the text. To do this, you need to adjust what is known as **Text Wrapping**. Once your photo has been inserted, right click the photo to get a menu of options. In Office 2003 and

earlier, choose Format, then Text Wrapping. In Office 2007 and later, choose Wrap Text. Then select either Tight or Square. Both of these allow text to wrap neatly around the photo, with Square allowing a bit

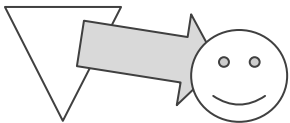
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more space between the text and the photo. Once you have wrapped the text, you can also easily drag the photo to different places on the page.

But let's suppose you wanted to place the photo in the exact center of the page. In Word 2007/10, select the photo, which opens the Picture Tools tab. Click the Format sub-tab and, in the Arrange group, click Position. Click the icon with the graphic centered and watch the photo jump to the center. You can position a graphic even more precisely by clicking "More Layout Options," choosing Size, and typing an exact location measurement.

Once a photo has been inserted into a document, you may want to take advantage of the simple, but useful enhancing and editing tools for photos which are features of the Office 2007/10 suites. When you select the photo, the **Picture Tools** tab appears in the ribbon. Click Format. Here you will find a variety of photo-enhancing tools, the most dramatic being the Styles Gallery, which contains borders and 3-D effects. Browse the gallery by selecting the photo and hovering your mouse over the styles one at a time. You can also make simple edits to brightness, contrast, color saturation, and tone using the editing tools on this tab. There is also a basic cropping tool. If you decide you prefer a different photo altogether, a click of the Change Picture button allows you to replace the current photo with another from your computer.



Another pair of useful terms to know is **Order** and **Grouping**. These are especially useful when working with shapes. You might, for instance, want to combine several shapes in a document to create a logo or other design. First click Insert – Shapes and insert each shape individually. Then drag them into an overlapping arrangement, as shown in the illustration. To change the order in which they are layered, right click one of the shapes, click Order, and select your instruction, such as "Bring to front." When the arrangement is complete, you can preserve it by grouping the elements. First select all the shapes by clicking Select – Objects in the Editing group on the Home tab. Then drag a dotted box around the group of shapes to select them all. You can tell you have them all selected when "handles" are visible around each object. Right click the group, and then click Grouping – Group. The separate shapes have now become one and can be moved without changing their arrangement.

It is also helpful to know the difference between a graphic which is **embedded** and one that is **linked to file**. Graphics are embedded by default, meaning a copy of the inserted graphic is located in the document file. This is usually appropriate. The 'Link to File' option, however, offers some advantages in certain situations. Let's say you have a large document with many photos and want to reduce its file size. You can insert a photo so that it is linked to its real location on your computer, such as My Pictures. Click the Insert tab – Picture. Locate and select the photo. Instead of clicking the Insert button, click the arrow next to Insert and choose Link to File. A virtual image of the photo appears in the document with a much smaller file size than the original. If you edit the photo in its actual location, the changes are reflected in its virtual image in the document.

Another valuable use of Link to File relates to charts. Let's say you have created a pie chart in Excel and want to insert it into a document. Because the data in this chart will change periodically, you can link the chart to its data set in Excel so it updates as you modify the data. This is much easier than recreating the chart each time the data changes. To do this, create the chart in Excel and paste it into the document using the "link data" paste option.

A caution with "Link to File" is if you change the location of the source file, the connection is broken. A photo will not be visible, and no longer will the chart change along with the source file. You can avoid this problem by choosing 'Insert and Link,' which both links the graphic to its source and also inserts it. The graphics will always be visible in the document, even if the link is broken.

Graphics add a lot to documents. Experiment with them using these tips.
